

CLAIMS

1. A multi-media management system comprising;

an electronic processor for controlling access to stored multi-media assets utilizing a database, the database containing a plurality of individual media objects the instantiations of which include video images, still images and text;

a server for enabling the stored assets to be accessed via the database by an outside user via a communications network, and an electronic processor controlled taxonomy system allowing a user to access the stored assets via the server, the taxonomy system linking categories of media objects in the database in a hierarchical tree system formed of nodes with each node representing a category, there being a basic parent/sibling relationship between the nodes of the tree, and

wherein the management system has, for a selected plurality of media objects as represented by the categories, association links linking categories so that a user can traverse the tree by moving from a first category to a second category which need neither be at a same hierarchical level in the tree or have any form of parent/sibling relationship with the first category.

2. The multi-media management system according to claim 1, wherein selected nodes of the tree are association nodes with each association node providing a one-way link to another node of the tree so as to provide an association link between nodes.

3. The multi-media management system according to claim 2, wherein selected association nodes can be linked so as to provide a two-way access between the nodes via association links.

4. The multi-media management system according to claim 1, wherein a plurality of media objects in the database have associated proxies, a proxy being a representation of an original instantiation of the media object in a different format or location.

5. The multi-media management system according to claim 4, wherein when an instantiation is video data, a proxy is a compressed form of the video data.

6. The multi-media management system according to claim 5 wherein the processor, in response to a request for downloading media having at least one proxy, determines whether or not the media or a selected proxy is to be downloaded.

7. The multi-media management system according to claim 1 adapted to generate and store a thumbnail of a video instantiation, the thumbnail being composed of an integer number of frames of the video instantiation, separately displayed in a single display frame, the integer number of frames being separated one from the other by intervening frames in the original video or film.

8. The multi-media management system according to claim 1 wherein, in response to a request for stored media, the electronic processor is adapted to check the parameters of the request and to customize requested media when it is displayed or downloaded in response to a determination by the parameter check that such customization is required.

9. The multi-media management system according to claim 8 adapted to check the origin of request for access to stored media and to customize the media when it is delivered.

10. The multi-media management system according to claim 1 further comprising at least one ingest station for generating media for storage in the management system, the ingest station having a browser compatible with a Web server, recording equipment for generating video/audio data, and a logger for editing recorded data.